

539 AD

The last games were held
at the Circus Maximus
by TOTILA

Byzantine general Belisarius
conquered Ravenna for Emperor
Justinian and led the city
into the 3rd and most important
stage of its history. It represented
the threshold of Byzantinism in Italy
for 200 years.

539

The Italian Ostrogothic Kingdom

Franks invade Upper Italy

Spring 539

When the siege of AUXIMUM began, it
tried down for 7 months the main
imperial army of 11,000 soldiers
under the command of Belisarius.
By that time Vitigis had won his
last costly victory.

Mar. 539

With the help of the Burgundians,
the Goths retook Milan. But the
Burgundians enslaved as many
Milanese women as they needed."

Early 539

The battles that spread across all of central Italy and into the valley of the Po had caused a dispersal of the forces on both sides. In early 539, large, even huge imperial armies were fighting around Oserio near Ancona, around Fiesole near Florence and around Milan.

Spring of 539

The emperor ordered Narses to return
to Constantinople. The eunuch obeyed
but his 2000 Haulian troops deserted
the Roman Army.

no sooner had Belisarius regained undisputed command over the imperial army, war resumed.

By forcing the Goths to defend strategically important sites, the imperial forces could deprive the Goths of their mobility. The result would be the eventual siege and capture of Ravenna.

As early as summer of 539 URAIAS

expected a reinforced imperial army in Liguria
established (the imperial forces) established a base
at the fortress of Dentona and thwarted all
attempts by URAS to leave the Po Valley
to relieve the Gothic-held - FIESOLE

The main theatre was the Adriatic Coast
there with 11,000 Belisarius assaulted the
fortress of AUXIMON, Vitigis in Ravenna approached
the Lombards, but they refused help

King THEUDEBERT led his Franks in a sudden raid into northern Italy. Like a tornado they first fell upon the Goths and then upon the imperial army. Before crossing the Po the Franks sacrificed Gothic women and children to the river god. But when food shortages and epidemics afflicted the Franks, their advance came to a standstill. THEUDEBERT soon withdrew from a large section of Italy.

Lat 539

After the Franks withdrew, the imperial forces & the Goths resumed hostilities while the situation reached stalemate in Liguria. FIESOLE and AULIMURUM fell. In Lat 539 Belisarius led the combined Roman Army to Ravenna, thus began the siege of the royal city. The Gothic garrison in the COTTIAN Alps (north of Genoa) surrendered. The rear of the imperial forces was now secure. Many Goths

went home and submitted to the emperor
URAIAS "undefeated in battle" had no choice but
to shut himself up in Pavia.

The last games were held at
the Cercus Maximus by TOTILA.
the depredation of the building
had already set in.

In the Middle Ages, it
was quarried for building
material.

After 3 yrs of campaigning, WITIGES was shut up in Rorennan. He would have accepted the generous terms offered by Justinian, but the Goths would have none of it. They actually offered the crown to Belisarius, who, without accepting it, beguiled them into opening the gate to him; whereupon he took possession in the name of Justinian. When

Ravenna fell, it seemed an easy matter
to complete the conquest; And Belisarius
was recalled to take up command
against the Persians, with whom
a 2nd war had broken out.

539

Belisarius besiegt
Witiges in Ravenna

539

MILAN was ravaged by the
Goths.